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WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Preparatory Committee
First session
Geneva, 9-13 September 1991
Items 5, 6 and 7 of the provisional agenda

AGENDA, RULES OF PROCEDURE, DATES, DURATION, VENUE OF AND PARTICIPATION AT THE WORLD CONFERENCE

PREPARATORY MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES AT THE INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

STUDIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE

Recommendations on the World Conference on Human Rights and its preparation submitted pursuant to paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 45/155

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

Page

II. RECOMMENDATIONS SUBMITTED BY SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND UNITED NATIONS ORGANS

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization 2

World Food Council 2

World Intellectual Property Organization 2

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 3

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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

1. As indicated in the Director General's letter of 27 March 1991, UNESCO is prepared to participate actively in the preparation of the World Conference on Human Rights.

2. The Work Plan of the draft of the Programme and Budget for 1992-1993 foresees, subject to the approval of the General Conference of UNESCO, that "An international conference on education for human rights and democracy will be convened jointly with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and in cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including youth organizations, in 1993". The results of this international conference, along with a number of other activities organized by UNESCO in this area, could provide a useful input, in an appropriate form yet to be determined, for the World Conference on Human Rights.

3. UNESCO recommends that the Secretary-General include in the preliminary draft agenda of the World Conference an item on education, research, information and documentation on human rights. In the light of the discussions of the Preparatory Committee of the Conference, UNESCO could make concrete suggestions for the annotated programme and documents to be provided. UNESCO could also prepare an exhibit of its books on the subject, as well as posters and audio-visual material.

4. Finally, it could be important at this stage to explore the appropriateness of launching, in the framework of the World Conference, a World Decade for Human Rights Teaching.

WORLD FOOD COUNCIL (WFC)

The following are suggested as themes for the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights: (i) WFC strongly believes that access to enough food should be proclaimed by the international community as a basic human right; (ii) hunger can no longer be blamed solely on humankind's inability to produce enough food for all; hunger today is largely a man-made phenomenon: human error or neglect creates it, human complacency perpetuates it and human resolve can eradicate it.

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION

1. The objectives and the activities of the World Intellectual Property Organization are aimed at promoting respect for and the protection of intellectual property throughout the world, through cooperation among States, as provided for in the Convention establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization.

2. The objectives of WIPO are fully in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular with article 27, which states:

> "1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

"2. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author."

3. Intellectual property comprises two main branches: industrial property, which relates chiefly to inventions, trademarks, industrial designs and appellations of origin, and copyright, which relates chiefly to literary, musical, artistic, photographic and audio-visual works.

4. Rights in intellectual property mean the rights relating to the results of intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, commercial, literary or artistic fields. The legal protection of intellectual property gives, on the one hand, statutory expression to the moral and economic rights of inventors and creators and, on the other, access to inventions and creations to the public.

5. Such protection promotes creativity and the dissemination and application of its results enhances the basic rights of individuals to property and freedom of economic activity.

6. The said creativity in the industrial property field leads to useful inventions which make work more efficient and life more comfortable; while creativity in the copyright field raises the beauty and quality of life.

7. In so far as developing countries are concerned, WIPO's development cooperation programme consists, inter alia, of the training of developing country nationals in the governmental and non-governmental sectors, the provision of legal, technical and administrative advice, the provision of equipment and industrial property documentation and the promotion of technological innovation. The aim of these activities is to facilitate the transfer of technology to developing countries as well as the development of indigenous technology and cultural and artistic creativity, thereby contributing to the countries' overall social, cultural and economic progress.

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

1. UNHCR wishes to lend its full support to the decision to convene the World Conference on Human Rights and finds it an appropriate time to conduct a review of what has been accomplished through the human rights programme and to identify areas for further progress.

2. Human rights issues encompass the entire refugee problem. Human rights are the basis for treatment of all human beings, be they nationals or non-citizens. Violations of human rights are a major cause of refugee exodus; they create complex problems of protection in countries of asylum and the restoration of human rights is a major factor in the successful resolution of long-standing refugee problems.

3. Amongst the many human rights issues deserving more attention from the international community, UNHCR has a particular interest in the following, which we hope could be reflected in the Conference agenda:

(a) The right of freedom of movement in relation to countries of refugee origin. A refugee who is compelled to leave, or denied the right to return to his/her country, is a person whose basic right of freedom of movement has been violated. It is the responsibility of countries of origin not to exile their citizens and not to deny them the right to move freely in relation to their own country;

(b) The right to a nationality. The inability of a refugee to avail him- or herself of the protection of nationality can be seen as an issue of statelessness, whether de facto or de jure. States have the responsibility to reduce statelessness and to provide for the possibility of enjoying the normal rights of nationality;

(c) Human rights and mass exoduses. This issue has already been discussed, both in the Commission on Human Rights and in the General Assembly. On the other hand, recent developments in a number of refugee situations have caused the close link between the two to come into renewed focus and new issues have entered into the debate, including the responsibilities of countries of origin and those of the international community generally to contribute to the prevention of mass flows and to the elimination of their causes, including action to protect and assist internally displaced persons, and to assure protection and assistance to refugees and to share the burden placed on countries of first refuge.

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